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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. DEGETTE).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

June 17, 2021.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DIANA DEGETTE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

O Lord, our God, speak into our lives as You have spoken throughout time. On the day of historic jubilee, speak good news to the poor that they would have occasion to celebrate emancipation from chains that yet bind them.

Proclaim liberty to those still held captive by injustice. Give sight to those blind to Your merciful love. Free all who are oppressed and break every yoke of prejudice and hatred.

Then call upon us to be the bearers of these truths in both word and deed. Cast our eyes on those around us that we would not see slave or free, but brothers and sisters, children of Your creation.

That each person who calls the United States home be allowed to delight in the freedoms afforded them by its democracy.

That liberty and justice would be woven inextricably into the fabric of our Nation and defended on behalf of all her people.

And that henceforward, all may be freed from hate and oppression to enjoy Your perfect design for this Republic.

We pray this, having each been made free in Your name.
Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 11(a) of House Resolution 188, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KELLER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF HOUSTON'S MEXICAN CONSULATE

(Ms. GARCIA of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in celebration of 100 years of the Mexican Consulate's presence in Houston. This is huge for the diplomatic relationship between two neighbors. The consulate was first established in 1920, and today it is the largest diplomatic mission in the city, providing services to tens of thousands of people a year. It is proof of the need to strengthen, now more than ever, our diplomatic ties and tackle our shared opportunities and challenges.

Congratulations, Consul General Alicia Kerber, the first woman to head the consulate's office in Houston. A good neighbor, we have worked together on food drives, COVID testing and vaccines, trade, and immigration rights.

Tomorrow, June 18, the consulate will be opening its new headquarters. Congratulations to the Mexican diplomatic mission in Houston. May we continue to work together the next 100 years.

Congratulations. Felicidades.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF BARBARA MORRIS STAFFORD

(Mr. GRIFFITH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GRIFFITH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in great sadness. Last night, at 6:16, my friend, a community leader and a member of my district staff, passed away, Barbara Morris Stafford.

Barbara was born in 1953, and was part of a political family. Her father, Howard Morris, was chairman of the Giles County Board of Supervisors. Her husband was a 10-term member of the Virginia House of Delegates, and when he died young, she took over his seat.

Now a single mother to Chris, Elizabeth, and Mary, she served her community for many years as a member of the Virginia House of Delegates; mayor of her hometown of Pearisburg, Virginia; director of the chamber of commerce; and then, for over 10 years and until last night, as a constituent services representative in my district office.

Barbara was a great leader and she will be sorely missed by the community she loved and the community that loved her.

THANKING CAPITOL POLICE

(Mr. McNERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCNERNEY. Madam Speaker, behind me is a sign that has decorated the office doors of my Republican colleagues for the past few months. I agree with the sentiment and I thank the Capitol Police Officers for their heroic defense on January 6, and every day that they protect the seat of this Nation's government.

My problem is that 175 of my Republican colleagues, many who still have this sign on their doors, voted against an independent bipartisan commission to investigate the causes of the January 6 insurrection.

Capitol Police Officers suffered debilitating physical and mental trauma, and two lost their lives because of the events of that day. Unless we understand how this act of terror was accomplished and hold those who are responsible accountable for their actions, it could happen again.

So why did so many Republicans vote against the commission?

Because they are afraid of what could be found. They are afraid that it could affect their future elections.

This is hypocrisy at its ugliest. While Republicans in Congress pay lip service to the Capitol Police and their heroism, they are too cowardly to back a commission that would shed light on the terrorist attack that put the brave women's and men's lives in danger on that terrible day.

VETERANS DESERVE TIMELY SERVICE

(Mr. KELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KELLER. Madam Speaker, America's veterans have served our Nation honorably, and they deserve timely access to the benefits they have earned through their service.

The National Personnel Records Center was forced to scale down its operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic and is currently staffed at 25 percent capacity, well below the staffing level needed to process the estimated 5,000 records requests it receives on an average day. These service records are required for veterans to access medical benefits; adjudicate disability claims; and request a commendation, award, or regalia, such as a Purple Heart or campaign service medal.

To date, there is a backlog of half a million veterans' requests at the NPRC and, in some cases, veterans have waited for over a year for documentation. That is unacceptable.

That is why I introduced the Records Act, which would compel the NPRC to fully reopen, address the backlog, and develop a plan to prevent this from ever happening again.

These men and women were willing to lay down their lives in service to our Nation, and we need to continue working to ensure our veterans get the level of responsiveness from their government that they deserve.

DISCLOSE WORKPLACE HARASSMENT

(Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER. Madam Speaker, I am proud to cosponsor an amendment to H.R. 1187, a bill that would increase transparency of publicly traded companies to disclose workplace harassment cases, and I am pleased to see this amendment passed in the House yesterday.

Workplace harassment is far too common, and the shareholders and customers of a company should know whether that company fosters a healthy work culture and that it allows its workers to thrive.

Up to six in seven women in the workplace report having experienced sexual harassment. Seven of 10 people of color report experiencing some form of verbal, racial, or ethnic harassment, and those who speak out usually face retaliation. This amendment would bring to light these forms of mistreatment and incentivize companies to prevent harassment in the workplace.

I thank Ms. FRANKEL for her leadership on H.R. 1187, and I encourage my colleagues to support this workplace improvement bill, as well as improving the quality of life.

HONORING THE VICTIMS OF THE MOTHER EMANUEL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH SHOOTING

(Ms. MACE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MACE. Madam Speaker, June 17, 2015, was one of the darkest days in Charleston, South Carolina, history. Six years ago today, nine church members were gunned down by a white supremacist at Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Today I rise to honor the lives of those lost that day. South Carolina's African-American community showed enormous restraint and an outpouring of love during this time, even to the irredeemable; and today we stand together, wrapped in the pride of Charleston Strong.

So today I would like to recognize Reverend and State Senator Clementa Pinckney, Cynthia Hurd, Reverend Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, Tywanza Sanders, Ethel Lance, Susie Jackson, Depayne Middleton Doctor, the Reverend Daniel Simmons, and Myra Thompson.

You will always be remembered, and may you rest in peace.

CONTINUE THE FIGHT FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

(Mr. BOWMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOWMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise with great excitement and joy in my heart that today Juneteenth will become a national holiday.

156 years after the end of slavery in this country, we will now, on an annual basis, reflect collectively and, hopefully, begin the process of truth and collective healing as a nation.

But I ask us that we must not stop here. We must continue to go forward to fight for racial justice because in many parts of our country it still exists in the form of housing discrimination and segregation, lack of access to healthcare, and wealth inequality.

It is so humbling to stand here as a Black man in America and take another step toward feeling whole in this country. But we must—we have to come together across party lines to do much more.

HONORING THE LIFE OF FOSTER FRIESS

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, it is my privilege today to rise to honor the life of Foster Friess, an American patriot who was a warrior for conservative and Christian values.

Foster truly lived the American Dream. He started his own business that led to incredible success. But Foster leaves behind a legacy that is far greater than success, as his generosity impacted the lives of countless people.

His favorite Bible verse from Galatians: "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."

To Foster and his wife, Lynnette, that verse was more than words; it was put into action daily. They were passionate about charitable giving and always looking for ways to lend their support to people in need.

He will be missed by many, and my prayers are especially with his wife, Lynnette, their 4 children and 15 grandchildren.

Foster's life glorified God, and his legacy will live on far beyond his years. We must all learn from his example.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DAVID SAUSSY

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remember and honor former Chatham County Commissioner David Saussy of Savannah, Georgia, who passed away on May 19 at the age of 86.

Born the youngest of five children, David moved to Savannah in 1964, and lived the next 57 years in Ardsley Park.